

If we had a window in this room, we could look out on the St Johns River and perhaps view the very spot on our river that MKR and her husband saw from the deck of the Clyde Line Steam ship as they sailed into our world in March of 1928, and viewed for the first time, our Florida.

They were met by Zelma Cason (remember that name) who took them to a hotel in Jacksonville before they continued their journeyed the 80 miles to their final destination, Cross Creek.

I want to share with you part of MKR's literary life as well as part of her private life that resulted in the creation of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Society nearly 60 years later.

In our own geographic areas, in our own home towns there are literary figures for whom a literary society awaits to be created by those of us in the room. A literary society awaits each of us.

But in reality none of us in this room has truly met MKR, yet many of us have passed so close to her.

Perhaps we have viewed the St. Johns River at the very spot where she arrived in 1928 at the age of 32.

Perhaps we have driven on Highway 301 between Waldo and Ocala only a few miles from her home near Island Grove.

We may even have walked the grounds of her beloved Cross Creek home.

Or as a child we may have been lost in the world of the The Yearling—the world of Ma and Penny Baxter, the world of Jody and his small deer named Flag.

Perhaps we truly have met Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings because we in this room know how brave a woman must be when life gives us a second chance.

So perhaps in reality none of us in this room has truly met MKR, yet many of us have passed so close to her.

Perhaps we have viewed the St. Johns River at the very spot where she arrived in 1928 at the age of 32.

Perhaps we have driven on Highway 301 between Waldo and Ocala only a few miles from her home near Island Grove.

We may even have walked the grounds of her beloved Cross Creek home.

Or as a child we may have been lost in the world of the The Yearling—the world of Ma and Penny Baxter, the world of Jody and his small deer named Flag.

Perhaps we truly have met Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings because we in this room know how brave a woman must be when life gives us a second chance.